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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, April 3, 2006, at 2 p.m.

Senate

FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2006

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lead us, O Lord, through the challenging roads of our world. Impart to us the wisdom to make wise decisions that lead to life and harmony. Make us quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Bind us together in one great family with many different opinions but a respect and esteem for each other.

Lead the Members of this body toward common ground. May they unite their efforts for the good of all, so that Your will may be done on Earth.

Remind us that everyone shall give account to You, the author and finisher of our faith.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we are immediately resuming debate today on the border security measure that is pending. Yesterday we were only able to complete action on one amendment, and we have three additional amendments still pending. During today's session we expect to set up votes on those amendments so that others may get into a queue for consideration.

With only a week left before our Easter break, it had been my desire to have more votes yesterday and today. We were unable to reach any agreements to allow that to happen, but today we do need to make progress on setting up votes for Monday. We need to put in full nights and days next week to complete the bill and, therefore, I am prepared to have several votes on Monday to begin to process as many amendments as possible. I encourage Senators to come to the floor today and Monday and use this time for any statements they may have on the border security issue.

BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, so far this week, we have had good debate, strong debate, robust debate, on strengthening our borders and crafting a comprehensive immigration plan. Everyone

agrees we need to secure our borders, that our national security is at stake.

We are also in agreement that we need to craft a comprehensive immigration plan that is compassionate, reasonable, and fair, that upholds our immigrant tradition without crossing over the line of granting amnesty. As I have said before, a nation that cannot secure its borders cannot secure its destiny.

I am gratified by my colleagues' support for my amendment yesterday to have the Department of Homeland Security collect data on the terrible problem of border crossing fatalities, of deaths of people crossing the border. The amendment also suggests policies to reduce the number of these tragedies.

As I mentioned on the floor, over the past decade over 3,000 men, women, and children—families—have died along our borders, in many cases because of the brutality and indifference of criminal human smugglers who, at the first sign of trouble, abandon their human cargo in the desert to suffer and die.

We have an obligation to protect our borders, but we also have an obligation to protect and preserve the life of every person who sets foot on American soil. I am hopeful that by gathering this information on this tragic problem, we can devise the best methods to put an end to it.

I am also certain that as we continue with the larger debate, we will be able to craft a comprehensive plan that deals fairly with the 11 to 12 million illegal immigrants now residing within our borders without granting amnesty.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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